



Angélica Infante-Green
Commissioner

State of Rhode Island
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Shepard Building
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Enclosure 6a2
October 20, 2020

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TO: Members of the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education

FROM: Angélica Infante-Green, Commissioner *A. Infante*

RE: **Highlander Charter School – Approval of Charter Renewal Recommendation**

Rhode Island General Law 16-77-5.1(b) designates the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education (the Council) as the authorizer for charter schools. In this capacity, the Council is responsible for charter school approval, renewal and revocation. RIDE is delegated with the authority and responsibility to manage a comprehensive system of charter school accountability, review, monitoring, and system management. With the support of RIDE's charter team, the Council plays a fundamental role in maintaining and advancing the quality and accountability of the charter sector.

RIDE has developed the charter performance framework that is based on Rhode Island's lessons learned and national best practice of charter school authorizing to inform charter renewal decisions. This process has brought clarity on each charter's performance annually, and ensure consistency of decisions that prioritize each school's academic performance.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT, the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education move to extend the charter of Highlander Charter School for 2 years, expiring at the end of school year 2022-23.

Enclosed Documents:

The following documents provide further detail regarding the Commissioner's recommendation and analysis contributing to that recommendation:

- Commissioner's Recommendation Overview: including an overview of the charter.
- Annual Performance Dashboards: containing detail on performance ratings for each school and each year of the charter's term.



Highlander Charter School

Overview of Commissioner's Charter Renewal Recommendation

Recommendation: 2-Year Extension

Charter Overview:

Current Charter Overview			
Charter Type	Independent	2018-19 Grades Served	PK-12
School-Year Opened	2000-01	2018-19 Enrollment	588
Current Charter Term	2018/19-2020/21	Authorized Enrollment	632
Enrolling Communities	Statewide	Location(s)	Providence (Grades PK-6) Warren (Grades 7-12)

School Mission and Model	
School Mission:	"Using innovative education practices as a catalyst for social change Highlander Charter School is working to ensure that all children have the educational opportunities and support they need to achieve their full potential."
School Model:	Highlander philosophy focuses on education as a vehicle for social change. Highlander Charter School implements a blended learning model to provide a personalized educational experience to all students, thereby acting as a catalyst for social justice. Every class at Highlander is unique in design. For elementary grades, the blending learning model lends to station rotation. Each station demands a different modality of learning, whether it be through computers, iPads, worksheets or smartboards for direct teaching. In middle and high school, Students work at their own pace in mathematics, with teacher guidance. ELA and History are conducted in small groups or partners to promote discussion. Physical science produces hands-on learning in labs.

Overview of Charter Performance Ratings:

The following table depicts the charter's performance according to the Charter Performance Review System. For more detail on performance ratings, please see the charter's renewal report and annual performance dashboards.

Current Performance Ratings: Highlander Elementary Charter School					
Indicators		SY16-17	SY17-18	SY18-19	SY19-20
Academic	(1A) School Performance	M	A	M	NA
	(1B) School Comparison	NR	DNM	NR	NA
Sustainability	(1) Financial	M	M	M	M
	(2) Organizational	E	A	M	M
	(3) Compliance	M	M	M	TBD



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Overview of Commissioner's Charter Renewal Recommendation

Recommendation: 2-Year Extension

Current Performance Ratings: Highlander Secondary Charter School					
Indicators		SY16-17	SY17-18	SY18-19	SY19-20
Academic	(1A) School Performance	M	A	A	NA
	(1B) School Comparison	NR	DNM	DNM	NA
Sustainability	(1) Financial	M	M	M	M
	(2) Organizational	E	A	M	M
	(3) Compliance	M	M	M	TBD

Ratings Key			
E	Exceeds Expectations	DNM	Does Not Meet Expectations
M	Meets Expectations	NR	Not Rated
A	Approaches Expectations	NA	Not Applicable